American Missionary Association.

The Death of Rev. L. A. Planving.

CONGREGATIONAL ROOMS,
FOURTH AVENUE AND TWENTY-SECOND STREET,
NEW YORK.

THE DEATH OF REV. L. A. PLANVING.

Laforest A. Planving, Principal of the Pointe Coupee Industrial and High School, was shot and instantly killed near his home at Oscar, La., on the night of August 30th. There is no doubt that this was an unprovoked and cruel murder. Mr. Planving was a young colored man of exceptional manliness and devotion. He established the school of which he was principal, making it largely self-supporting from the very first. The American Missionary Association aided him by a yearly appropriation, and was in constant correspondence

REV. L. A. PLANVING AND TEACHERS.

with him counseling and directing him in his work. He had been held in highest esteem by both white and colored citizens who knew him in Louisiana. His record at Straight University, from which institution he graduated, was of the best. The teachers in that institution, including President Atwood, Dr. Tenney and Prof. Barber, the latter now of Mount Holyoke College, bear testimony to his high character, his industry and fidelity as a student.

When he established the school he consulted freely with the white planters in the neighborhood of Oscar and received their hearty approval of his work. He especially rejoiced in the sympathy which he had from these leading citizens. He had appeared on the platform of the American Missionary Association and won the hearts of those who

heard him with his simple, straightforward story of the work he was seeking to do and his high hopes for his people.

That such a man should be shot down in such a work is a most shameful comment on American civilization and upon the administration of law and the defense of worthy citizens in Louisiana.

Immediately upon learning of the death of Mr. Planving, Dr. Washington Gladden, President of the American Missionary Association, sent the following letter to Hon. W. W. Heard, Governor of Louisiana:

COLUMBUS, OHIO, September 1, 1903.

To His Excellency, the Hon. William W. Heard, Governor of Louisiana:

HONORABLE AND DEAR SIR. I have read in the morning paper of this date the report of the assassination at Pointe Coupee of the Rev. Laforest A. Planving, head of the Pointe Coupee Industrial and High School for colored children and youth.

This institution is under the care of the American Missionary Association, of which I have the honor to be President. Mr. Planving was in the employ of our Association. We have known his record and believe him to have been a man of exceptional ability and of excellent character. He spoke at the annual meeting of our Association two years ago and charmed all by the good sense and the good spirit of his address. We cannot believe that he can have deserved his fate.

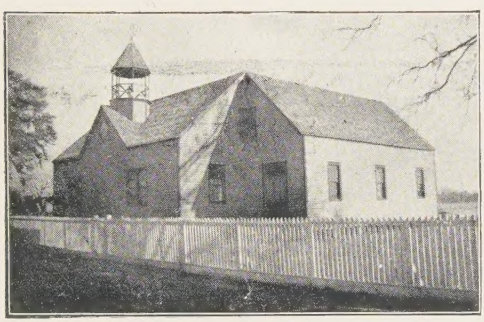
No man can deserve assassination. The humblest, and the meanest and worst of men has a right to be dismissed from the earth by some other method than that of assassination. Not only so, it is a solemn truth that no civilization has a right to exist which harbors assassins.

Speaking for a large constituency, which has many teachers and preachers in the Southern States, and which has sought to do good and not evil in all its work through all this region, may I express the confident expectation that your Excellency will take prompt and efficient measures to secure the condign punishment of the perpetrators of this crime.

With great respect I am faithfully yours,

WASHINGTON GLADDEN.

It is certainly to be hoped that Governor Heard will make every possible effort for the discovery and the punishment of these criminals. The good name of the State of Louisiana as well as the protection of other honorable citizens demands this. The following comes to us from a resident of Louisiana who visited the scene of Mr. Planving's death immediately after it occurred:



POINTE COUPEE SCHOOL.

"Mr. Planving is as truly a martyr as the missionaries in China who fell in the Boxer uprising. His school was conceived in Christian faith and has now been consecrated by his own blood. He was a brave man; nothing could daunt or discourage him. He walked in his integrity. Although his school was twice fired into at night, during the past year, one of the shots striking his bedroom window near which his wife with her little child was lying, he never swerved for a moment in his purpose to push his work forward and to give his people the blessings of a Christian education. According to a wish expressed some months ago, he lies buried near his school under a magnificent pecan tree, whose rugged strength and fruitfulness are a fit emblem of his own manly character and energy. He leaves a widow and three small children with little to support them. He put everything into his school, expecting some day to find a support in that for those who were dear to him. No death has so profoundly shocked us here. I am glad that Dr. Gladden has written to the Governor."

It certainly is a serious question whether missionaries should be defended by armies and gunboats in China and Turkey and be unprotected against murder in Louisiana.

From Governor Heard.

Honorable W. W. Heard, Governor of Louisiana, has written a letter to Dr. Washington Gladden, President of the American Missionary Association, expressing great regret at the death of Mr. Planving, which he characterizes as a "very regrettable occurrence." Governor Heard gives assurance that every possible means will be used to "discover the perpetrator or perpetrators of this reported crime." All friends of justice and law will rejoice in the attitude which Governor Heard takes and must thoroughly appreciate his prompt and valuable letter.

A Magna Charta.

The Bible is the grand charter of man's political and civil equality, liberty and order. It is the guardian and the only adequate protector of his social happiness. Should the human race ever come fully under its influence, both national wars and personal dissensions would cease, and this world would become a terrestrial paradise.—*Benj. Silliman.*